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It is with deep regret that we announce the death of a member of our advisory Panel and one of our most diligent and encouraging readers, Rev Professor John O'Neill. A tribute to him will appear in Issue 2 of *IBS* vol 25.

FAMILY FINANCES: 'Kinship' and the Collection – an exploratory paper

Donald P. Ker

ABSTRACT

Throughout the Corinthian Correspondence there are concerns about financial affairs, not least as Paul seeks to persuade the Corinthians to contribute to the Collection which he was organising. Starting from the observation that a sense of 'Kinship' and financial obligation belong together, which can be illustrated from the Jerusalem Church, this paper explores the possibility that Paul had a radically new sense of kinship in Christ which had many implications, not least financial. His churches, however, did not necessarily understand or accept these new relationships.

The question of money runs through the Corinthian correspondence like an underground stream which occasionally bubbles up to the surface. Whenever the stream appears the waters are troubled. Paul and the Corinthians are clearly in disagreement both over the manner in which Paul insists on his own financial independence from the Corinthians and also over Paul's arrangements for the "Collection for the Saints" in Jerusalem.

We first get the sense that the Collection is a problematic issue in 1 Corinthians 16. Having used the bulk of his letter to persuade a questioning and divided Corinthian church of his role and the validity of his theological and pastoral instructions there are three remaining issues which pose difficulty for Paul. We might consider them to be test cases. In reverse order, Apollos (v 12) clearly has a following in Corinth which poses a threat to Paul. Paul deals here with Apollos' possible return on his own, for Apollos does not wish to join a Pauline delegation. In so doing Paul's manner might well be thought dismissive[1].

[1] See Ker 2000 for further discussion.

Second, Paul's own plans to visit Corinth again (vv 5-11) are clearly dependent on the community's acceptance of his leadership. They are therefore highly delicate, as his defensiveness in 2 Corinthians about changed travel plans might illustrate.

And then there is the Collection (vv 1-4), which, as Galatians 2:10 illustrates, is not simply an optional extra but rather an essential ingredient of the Pauline mission. Paul writes in a rather clipped imperative mood, perhaps judging detailed defence to be not so much unnecessary but rather inappropriate. These are all sensitive points in which Paul does not wish any further controversy to be aroused. Having sought to establish his authority throughout the letter he determines here, when it matters most, simply to assume that authority and exercise it.

By the time we come to 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 the detailed defence which 1 Corinthians lacked has become essential. Paul has to devote two chapters to the theme.[2] The tone of his language is noticeably different and we sense that he does not expect the Corinthians simply to follow his instructions. All his powers of persuasion are needed. As we read on in 2 Corinthians we sense that Paul is being accused of financial irregularity, not just because he continues to insist in his own independence (11:7-11), but because he had taken advantage of the Corinthians and deceived them (12:16-18). What keys can help us unlock the secrets which lie behind this damaging situation?

Economic Location of the Corinthian Church:

A reasonable place to start is the attempt to describe the economic conditions and financial approach of the Corinthian Church. We look at two different theses. First, Gerd Theissen's work has been particularly influential in seeking to understand the dynamics lying behind the Corinthians' relationship with Paul and other preachers.

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[2] Whatever approach we may have to the question of the relationship of chapters 8 and 9 to each-other and to the rest of the letter the extent of Paul's theological and rhetorical investment into these chapters remains.

Theissen identifies two types of Christian missionaries, namely the itinerant charismatics and the community organisers.

> "Paul represents a type of missionary who can be described as the goal-oriented community organiser, breaking new ground and establishing independent groups apart from Judaism rather than 'grazing' among existing groups of sympathisers. It is his intention to missionize the entire world in this fashion..."[3]

Theissen has made significant contribution to our understanding of the situation by pointing out that economic, political, ecological and cultural factors are involved. He illustrates how difference in the understanding of how a community subsists can affect the whole life of that community. However in two areas, both of which are illustrated in the sentences quoted above, his thesis may need some amendment.

1. Although Paul, the community organiser, senses that he is directly commissioned by God to be apostle to the Gentiles, and therefore seeks to operate at a certain distance from the Jerusalem church, it is misleading to suggest that the groups which he wishes to establish are also independent, and necessarily see themselves apart from Judaism. The relationship is much more subtle, and thus the possibility of Paul's position being misunderstood by the Corinthians is much more likely.

2. Theissen views the itinerant charismatics as 'beggars' who 'grazed' among existing groups of sympathisers. Even if this image is appropriate to the missions described in the synoptic gospels it doesn't completely fit the later situation, insofar as it understates the element of commitment within the community. Paul's language of 'rights' with regard to Cephas and the other apostles in 1 Corinthians 9 suggests that they enjoyed a far deeper level of support and commonality than Theissen's implies. The 'itinerant charismatics' are not perceived as

[3] Theissen, 1982: 40

outsiders who must be offered basic hospitality. They expect to be received into the household of the church.

By way of contrast Justin Meggitt, who offers a radical critique of Theissen's work, understands the economic arrangements of the Pauline communities as what he terms 'Christian Mutualism'. His approach may best be set out by quoting two paragraphs of his work.

> "Christian mutualism… emerged to meet a very real need. Given the difficult economic experience of most inhabitants of the first-century Graeco-Roman world, coupled with the near absence of other effective survival strategies for urban populations living close to subsistence level, we can say that it represented an understandable response. Indeed, we can go further: it seems to have met a very real need extremely well. The mutualism that was practised appears to have been especially powerful. Two of its features in particular are indicative of its considerable strength. Firstly, the explicitness of the relationship. Amongst the most important factors that affect the likelihood and extent of material reciprocation is the degree to which a relationship is visible for the parties involved. From the apostle's lengthy discussions of the subject of the collection (2 Cor. 8 and 9), and the open and effective response that the churches made to his appeals, it is clear that Christian mutualism was indeed a prominent and distinct component of the lives of the Pauline communities.
>
> Secondly, the enmeshment of the theme of economic mutuality in the theological, and in particular Christological, language of the community also gave substantial weight to this form of exchange relationship. The theme of mutualism was inseparably bound up with Paul's participationist, corporate, Christology. For the believers that had salvation ἐν Χριστῷ were inexorably joined not only with their Lord but with each other, as we can see in the famous body imagery; an idea complemented and amplified by Paul's pneumatology. A similar notion is found in

> the recurring Pauline theme of κοινωνια – the believers' fellowship with Christ also presumes fellowship with others."[4]

Meggitt's approach has considerable strengths. He seeks to paint a realistic picture of economic conditions in the first century, and does so on the basis that the written sources to which we often turn do not reflect the conditions of a large majority of the population. Further he seeks to ensure that the significance of economic context should be taken properly into account. In this regard, for instance, he insists that Paul's references to reciprocity in 2 Cor. 8:14 should be understood in a material sense, rather than interpreting the περισσευμα of Jerusalem as a spiritual resource from which the Corinthians may benefit.

However Meggitt's proposal of economic mutualism has three difficulties:

1. It is dependant on his conclusion that the Pauline communities "shared fully in the bleak material existence that was the lot of the non-elite inhabitants of the empire".[5] While Meggitt argues this case carefully throughout his work it is not necessarily proven. Lack of non-elite sources must be admitted, but his use of the fictional Mycellus to illustrate the picture which he wishes to paint is not entirely persuasive. Likewise his virtual dismissal of Paul's comment to the community in 1 Cor 1:26 that not many of them had been wise etc. leaves his case vulnerable.

2. Meggitt seems rather over-optimistic about the success of this arrangement. It is true that members of the Pauline communities seem to be able to survive physically, which would of itself suggest effective strategy. However the misunderstanding which lies behind Paul's attempts to organise the collection in Corinth suggest, at very least, that the concept of mutualism was not as readily accepted as Meggitt suggests.

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[4] Meggitt, 1998:173-174

[5] Meggitt, 1998: 153

3. The underlying philosophy behind mutualism appears to be a much later construct which Meggitt then reads back into the situation.

Thus Theissen and Meggitt, while offering helpful insight into the financial issues which Paul faced, still leave us with questions.

Kinship – a new possibility:

Thomas Gallant, although writing in the first instance about Ancient Greece, introduces a comment which may help our analysis:

> "Four broad categories of people constituted an individual's support network: kinsmen, neighbours and 'friends', associations and patrons. Together these formed a household's third-order defense against food shortages, dearth and famine"[6]

It is not stretching Gallant's categories over-much to suggest that Theissen's approach reflects on the role of patrons, while Meggitt's mutualism has something of the character of an association[7]. We therefore raise the question as to whether the category of 'kinship' may be of some help to us in exploring the issue further.

Gallant's proposal that kinship and financial support are linked may readily be observed in a variety of cultures over the centuries. Thus we may cite the Irish emigration to the United States towards the end of the 19th century, where successful children sent a little money back to struggling parents or siblings, and equally we note the pressures felt by those who come from Africa or the Asian sub-continent to study in scholarship programmes in Britain who are expected to send some of their new found 'wealth' home to support extended family through education or hospital charges.

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[6] Gallant, 1991: 143

[7] Ascough, 2000 develops the concept of an association further with particular reference to the Thessalonian Community, but it is noticeable that Paul's language does not much reflect the language of associations.

How far, therefore, can kinship help us in understanding some of the financial arrangements which operated, or failed to operate, in the early church? In the nature of things the relationship between finance and kinship is not an issue which is addressed in our formal literary sources from the Graeco-Roman world. The silence makes it difficult for us to proceed with any degree of certainty, and yet should not surprise us, because matters of personal and family finance tend not to be addressed in a formal literary way.[8]

Turning to Paul and thinking about his financial dealings with the Corinthians it is striking that in 2 Corinthians he addresses his readers as ἀδελφοι on only three occasions:- 1:8, which is the first opportunity for him to do so after the opening doxology, 13:11, which forms part of the closing greeting and "perhaps significantly"[9] 8:1, where he introduces a long explanation and defence of the Collection. The immediate impetus which makes us want to explore further is well expressed by Richard Melick. Writing of 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 he comments,

> "At a deeper level, however, Paul speaks here of Christian brotherhood. While ostensibly the r elief offering occupies the prominent place, the passage concerns the well-being of Christian brothers and sisters. It speaks to a Christian's world and life view, the reality of a spiritual tie that transcends physical dimensions and the fulfilling of OT prophetic expectations."[10]

Regrettably Melick doesn't explore this terminology further, because it may hold the secret of Paul's motivation and the Corinthian misunderstanding. What if the 'tie' is understood as a

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[8] It is also worth noting that where the desirability of family support may be discussed, as in Plutarch's Περι Φιλαδελφιας there is a tendency to idealise rather than describe current reality.

[9] Barnett, 1997: 83

[10] Melick, 1989: 97

new sort of kinship whose reality is to be expressed in everyday living? The resulting thesis might be formulated as follows.

1. The Jerusalem Community had a strong expression of common life which committed them to one another in a 'family' type of structure not dissimilar to some of the patterns which we also see within Essene communities. Paul, though expressing his independence from the Jerusalem community (perhaps because his Pharisaic understanding of life simply differed from the Essene pattern), nevertheless admits of his links with Jerusalem through positively responding to their request to 'remember the poor', in other words to show financial solidarity with them, which he can only do through his communities.

2. Paul's foundation for this commitment is his sense that the church is indeed a new 'family' – that the last days are breaking in and bringing with them a new pattern of kinship. For now the old and the new sit awkwardly side by side. Paul faces difficulty and misunderstanding in the Corinthian community because they have not appreciated this new understanding of kinship and, furthermore, since they recognise that there are differences between Paul and the Jerusalem church they meet his initiative in raising funds with suspicion.

I believe that each one of these proposals is feasible. It is hard, however, to go further than this since, as noted above, evidence is difficult to obtain and, at times, ambiguous. We examine each proposal in turn.

The Jerusalem Community

Our chief source for the Jerusalem Christian Community is the Book of Acts, but it must be acknowledged from the outset that evidence from Acts may be evaluated in different ways. Neither an uncritical nor an over-sceptical reading may do justice to the material.

Acts 2:44-45 and Acts 4:32-5:11 both refer to community of goods in the early Jerusalem community. In addition we find reference to daily meal fellowship in homes (Acts 2:46) and a 'daily distribution' (Acts 6:1). It has long been a critical consensus that

these references are not to be seen as referring to any particular historical arrangement but rather reflect a familiar 'topos' in which the sharing of goods is an ideal of close friendship, often commended but rarely, if ever, achieved. Thus, for instance, Luke's phrase ἅπαντα κοινα seems not far removed from the frequently found Greek proverb κοινα τα των φιλων. Luke's point has been understood as an attempt to demonstrate that ideals were fulfilled uniquely in the Jerusalem community.[11]

Not that all commentators are quite so clear-cut. C.K. Barrett suggests that it was "reasonable" that the Christian community should follow a plan of common ownership which was being practised by other groups, although he also suggests that Luke was influenced by literary precedents. [12]

At this point it is appropriate to raise a general question regarding literary precedents and their influence on Luke. It is clear that Luke intended his two volume work to be literature. Thus there is justification for making comparisons with other literary sources from the ancient world. But it is harder to fit Luke precisely into any literary genre[13] and there are no easy parallels to be made between Luke's relationship to the early church and the relationship between any other ancient author and the community about which he wrote.

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[11] See, for example Conzelmann, 1987:24 - " This picture of sharing property is idealised…..Despite the existence of communistic groups in the vicinity of Jerusalem, Luke's portrayal should not be taken as historical (some sort of organised means of support would have been necessary, as in these groups). Thus we cannot speak of a 'failure of the experiment', nor can we draw conclusions for a primitive communistic ideal. Furthermore, Luke does not present this way of life as a norm for the organisation of the church in his own time. It is meant as an illustration of the uniqueness of the ideal earliest days of the movement."

[12] Barrett, 1994:168

[13] See, for instance, Alexander, 1993, who, while not totally persuasive that Luke /Acts should been seen within the "scientific tradition" of writing, has raised significant questions as to whether Luke can be understood as 'Historiography'.

By way of contrast we turn to an approach introduced by S. Scott Bartchy. Bartchy questions whether Luke is in fact presenting the early church as an idealised golden age. He suggests that the way forward may be found,

> "in an analysis of first-century Mediterranean kin groups and of the relations between patrons in such groups and their clients, whereby I propose that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem regarded themselves (and certainly were regarded by Luke) as a so-called fictive kin group, that is, a group practicing general reciprocity not based on blood ties."[14]

An immediate difficulty with this quotation is the manner in which Bartchy introduces patron/client language alongside that of fictive kinship. This is loose terminology which is unhelpful. At the same time it does not necessarily render Bartchy's overall approach invalid, and it may be justified to some extent when we recognise that within the Jerusalem church there were people of varied economic status.[15]

A larger difficulty involves the production of clear parallels to demonstrate that the theory of fictive kinship could in fact operate. One attempt at this is provided by Brian Capper. Capper's thesis is that the existence of community of goods was "an established feature of first century Palestinian culture, amongst those Essene communities who shared their property communally".[16] The existence of the Essene arrangement is not seriously questioned in the way in which the Acts account has been. Thus, Capper notes, we have two accounts of a similar phenomenon occurring in the same location, Palestine, at approximately the same time. One is accepted while the other is considered historically unlikely. Should they be separated in this way?

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[14] Bartchy, 1991:313

[15] see Fiensy, 1995: 226-230

[16] Capper, 1995:327

Essene community of goods, as evidenced by Philo, Pliny the Elder and Josephus,[17] is also to be found in the *Rule of the Community* (1QS) and in fragments of the *Damascus Document*.[18] These do not offer a completely uniform picture of the way in which community affairs were managed. However variation of practice was not only permissible, it was only to be expected.[19]

Furthermore, because the Essene communities did not live in total isolation but were well known in various towns and villages another possibility arose: "Any religious grouping within Palestine with a mind to try, any group which thought the exercise meaningful, could have reasonably easily imitated Essene community of property".[20]

Having established the possibility of a nascent Jewish renewal movement, such as the community of Jesus of Nazareth, adopting in some form a practice which is clearly evidenced in Essene communities, Capper then examines whether any of the language in Acts might point us in an Essene direction. The most significant phrase which he finds, in 2:44, is the statement which immediately precedes the claim that they had all things in common, namely ἦσαν ἐπι το αὐτο. This is certainly an unusual phrase. A search through extant Greek literary sources establishes its occurrence on six occasions in total, five of which are direct quotations or possible references to Acts 2:44. The sixth is a reference in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs to Levi and Judah who escape shipwreck on a shared plank of wood.

[17] Capper notes Philo, *That every good man is free* 75-91, *Hypothetica* 1-18; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 5.17.4 §73; Josephus, *BJ* 2.119-161; *Ant* 18.18-22

[18] We note at this point the ongoing discussion regarding the relationship between Qumran and the Essene movement elsewhere which may make us proceed cautiously. It will be further discussed below, p 10.

[19] See Capper, 1995: 333f for a fuller explanation

[20] Capper, 1995: 334

Capper, following M. Wilcox, suggests that ἦσαν ἐπι το αὐτο attempts to render the phrase dxyl tvyhl ('to be to the together') which is found in the *Rule of the Community.* The explanation by Luke και εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινα is added because the Greek ἦσαν ἐπι το αὐτο could not carry the full implication of belonging to the dxy on its own. The use of ἦσαν ἐπι το αὐτο in the 'Testament' might suggest that the phrase is not necessarily a translation, but we must also remember that, even if the 'Testament' was an original Greek composition it bears close relationship to similar Hebrew and Aramaic works.[21]

The second reference to community of goods, in Acts 4:32-34, does not contain the term ἦσαν ἐπι το αὐτο. Capper admits that 'idealising' is stronger in this reference, but he seeks to follow Cadbury's observation that, when Luke uses material from his sources more than once the first use of the material is closer to its original wording, whereas the second use is closer to its location in the sources.[22] Thus we should bear in mind the reference to the dxy while recognising that the accounts both of Barnabas and of Ananias and Sapphira are directly related to their involvement in this inner group.[23]

Capper discusses three more issues in support of his position. First he proposes that the story of Ananias and Sapphira reflects a process of two-stage entry to the community as was the case in the *Rule of the Community.* He then seeks to demonstrate that there had been an 'Essene Quarter' on Mount Zion, which may have exerted influence on the early Christian community. Finally he examines the dispute in Acts 6 over the daily distribution, which he concludes is much closer to the Essene system of daily meal-fellowship than the Rabbinic system of the 'basket' with which it has often been

[21] see the discussion by H.C. Kee on the original language of the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs in Charlesworth, 1983:777

[22] The difficulty in making any clear statement about sources in Acts is noted.

[23] Capper, 1995: 336

compared. If this is the case then one significant result of the controversy is, according to Capper, "the establishment of officers to organise care within the hellenist community, which clearly had no arrangements of any kind for the care of its poor"[24]. This incident, and the development of the church in Antioch where community of goods does not appear as a feature, marks a significant divide in the history of the church, inasmuch as community of goods was no longer part of the programme of the wider community. Capper sums up his position thus,

> "In Jerusalem, community of goods extended over a section of the community of the 'Hebrews'. It was not binding on the whole group, and was probably not reproduced amongst the hellenists while in Jerusalem, and certainly not in the hellenist community at Antioch and beyond in the Pauline mission."[25]

What are we to make of this thesis? Luke, as a Greek author, has been read alongside other Greek authors in most of the scholarship of the twentieth century. Thus it is only natural that a familiar theme, such as παντα τα κοινα, might be interpreted in the same idealistic fashion as seems intended when we encounter the phrase elsewhere. Yet where Capper offers what appears to be a feasible historical context, instead of the absence of context which an idealistic reading implies, the terms of the discussion change. One might assume that the burden of proof now lies with those who would suggest that Capper's attempt to parallel the early church with an Essene community is unrealistic.

One attempt comes from Andreas Lindemann. Within a broader thesis which seeks to suggest that Luke wanted it to be known that the disposition of available financial resources demanded meticulous supervision Lindemann addresses Capper's thesis directly. He suggests that, since Luke uses the phrase ἐπι το αὐτο on two further occasions (1:15 and 2:1) where Luke does not appear to be using a source and where there is no property reference, the

[24] Capper, 1995: 354

[25] Capper, 1995:355

phrase therefore, of itself, says nothing about the property relationships of those assembled.[26] However neither of these references involves the use of the verb ἦσαν and each has a clear community context and so Capper's reading is not necessarily contradicted. Lindemann finds himself unable to make any comment on a possible historical context for Luke's description. As suggested above, once a reasonable context has been proposed it becomes harder to adopt this position.[27] One should add that despite his caution in assessing any historical background to the Acts account Lindemann helpfully comments that "Luke lets it be known that the disposition of the available financial resources demanded meticulous supervision."[28]

Another critique of Capper's position comes from Kyoung-Jin Kim. In a larger study on Luke's approach to wealth and almsgiving he devotes particular space to a comparison between the Jerusalem community and the Qumran community, particularly regarding their financial and eating arrangements. Noting both similarities and dissimilarities between them he comes to the conclusion that :

> "..our discussion shows that although both communities used slightly different systems to run their communal life, the basic motive of their systems was so different as to make a clear distinction between the two societies"[29]

There are problems with Kim's critique. First, although the motives of the Qumran community and the Jerusalem church were admittedly different, this does not necessarily mean that their understanding of how their life together should be structured was

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[26] Lindemann, 1998: 206 n21

[27] Lindemann, 1998: 216 f

[28] Lindemann, 1998: 218

[29] Kim, 1998: 252

also fundamentally different. Furthermore this argument should be borne in mind when assessing the variety of material which we have on the Essenes and Qumran. As has increasingly been recognised there are significant differences between the community in Qumran and other Essene communities, not least in their view of the Jerusalem Temple and in details of their community life. This means we need to handle sources carefully, particularly when we seek to relate them to one-another, as Capper admittedly does. However it is possible to overstate the distinction. Vermes' judgement that "..this was a single religious movement with two branches" is still relevant.[30]

Second, Kim may have allowed his overall interest in stewardship and almsgiving to dominate his analysis overmuch. Thus he comments, "..in terms of the motive for creating a common fund, while at Qumran it was a means of maintaining its communal life in an isolated region, it was an expression of loving care on behalf of the poor in the Jerusalem community."[31] Kim's deliberate restriction of his comparison to the Qumran community precludes his from discussing other Essene communities where the motivation for a communal life-style must have been wider. With regard to the Jerusalem community, whereas the communal life-style was indeed an expression of loving care, this does not imply that such care was the major motive for undertaking such a commitment. Indeed Kim goes on to note how the common fund must have been used for the support of the Jerusalem leaders, though he fails to take into account the significance of this observation.[32]

A further critique of Capper's approach is offered by Richard Bauckham. Like Kim he stresses first that we may not use Qumran as a sources for all Essene organisation and thinking.

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[30] Vermes, 1995:17

[31] Kim, 1998: 239

[32] Kim, 1998: 240

> "The Qumran community was not the centre or headquarters of the wider Essene movement nor a representative constituent of it, but a radical and minority group, who separated from mainstream Essenism in a process of painful schism that left them permanently alienated and distinct from the wider Essene movement...."[33]

Bauckham has no difficulty in recognising that there was an Essene community in Jerusalem, but is unconvinced by any suggestion that they had a particularly close relationship with the early Christian community.[34] More specifically he questions whether either the term κοινωνια or the phrase ἐπι το αὐτο can necessarily be linked to the Qumran concept of dxy. He finds that the case is not compelling, partly because he judges that κοινωνια in Acts 2:42 must be "something that happened in the community" rather than "a name for the community"[35] and partly, (as with Lindemann noted above) because Luke uses the phrase ἐπι το αὐτο elsewhere without possible allusion to the dxy.[36]

Bauckham's critique undoubtedly undermines any attempt to build too much upon a link between the Essenes and the early Christian community, but, as with Lindemann and Kim, it does not render such a link as necessarily impossible or indeed improbable.

If we cautiously retain the possibility of community of goods in the early church we note the fact that Luke hints at two other significant issues. First, in his account in Acts 6 of the dispute between Hellenists and Hebrews he affirms that, despite tensions which (whatever else lay behind them) were expressed in a material fashion, the church sought to be an open community rather than a narrowly defined one in its sustenance of its members. Second, the

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[33] Bauckham, 2003: 63

[34] Bauckham, 2003:73-74

[35] Bauckham, 2003:85

[36] Bauckham, 2003: 88

community was open to receiving support from beyond Jerusalem, as the accounts of Barnabas from Cyprus and famine relief from Antioch make clear.

It needs to be recognised at this point that we have insufficient evidence to develop in any further detail the precise form in which community of goods was exercised within the Jerusalem church. However there are no grounds for suggesting that the arrangement was abandoned at an early stage. Should we therefore conclude that Luke's account of community of goods in the Jerusalem church represents an historical reality, which lay at the very heart of the group's understanding of itself, then we must take it into account whenever we consider the relationship between Jerusalem and any other part of the Christian mission.

No strong case needs to be made for establishing Paul's independence from the Jerusalem community. Even though Galatians is written in the heat of controversy Paul's clear conviction that his apostolic status comes from the call of the risen Christ rather than the appointment of the Jerusalem leaders and his description of the distance which exists between them is hardly exaggerated. Nevertheless even where there were theological differences some sort of coherent link needed to be maintained. This would, of course, provide some re-assurance to Paul's churches that they were not entirely cut off from their Jerusalem roots. It was also significant for Paul himself. As we see in 1 Corinthians 15:3-11, however unusual Paul's entry to the apostolic community might have been, he was still concerned to express his continuity with the Jerusalem church.

In Galatians 2:9-10 this continuity is expressed by Paul both in the δεξιας κοινωνιας given by James, Peter and John and in their request that των πτωχων ... μνημονευωμεν. If our suggestion that community of goods was being practiced by the Jerusalem community is valid then this "right hand of fellowship" signifies more than simply the formal conclusion of an agreement[37] and

[37] as in Betz, 1979: 100

"remembering the poor" is more than an occasional charitable act.[38] We may be looking at an explicit recognition of kinship privilege and obligation, despite the difficulties which Paul's different understanding of his mission and physical distance from Jerusalem might impose. It is significant that immediately after he asserts his enthusiasm to embrace this commitment Paul recounts how it was broken by Peter in his withdrawal from table fellowship in Antioch.

We should note at this point that Paul's Pharisaic roots may not have fitted him well for this sort of relationship. Anthony J. Saldarini comments:

> "Concretely, a person was not primarily a Pharisee. A member of the Pharisees retained his family and territorial allegiances, his roles in society and occupation, his friends and network of associates."[39]

As Saldarini notes, there is considerable discussion as to the extent to which Pharisees may be considered a sect, but even if we term them thus we should not see them as in any way withdrawn from the life of the whole community. Whereas they shared in table fellowship they did not, as far as we know, practice community of goods, nor have we any evidence that they view one-another as kin in the manner in which, for instance, Josephus describes the Essenes. Thus we should not be surprised that Paul's concern to make some sort of financial commitment to a community which was very different from his personal approach to life caused confusion and misunderstanding.

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[38] Larry W. Hurtado's comment that "it is clear that the collection was not just a practical deed of benevolence" (Hurtado, 1979:48) makes the point well. The Collection clearly indicates a relationship between Paul and Jerusalem, although the thrust of Hurtado's article, namely that the Collection left Paul vulnerable to the charge from his opponents that he was subservient to Jerusalem, is less convincing.

[39] Saldarini, 1989: 284

Paul's understanding of the church as 'family'.

How did Paul envisage relationships operating within the Christian community? One approach is to examine his frequent use of sibling language. Did Paul use this language mainly as a rhetorical strategy in order to help believers have positive and constructive relations with each-other, or did he see a deeper reality in which the new relationships of the last days were beginning to be exercised now? It is clear that elsewhere Paul's language is necessarily metaphorical. Thus, for instance, when he describes himself as δουλος Χριστου Ιησου (Romans 1:1) or when he tells the Corinthians that he preaches ἑαυτους δε δουλους ὑμων (2 Corinthians 4:5) we should not imagine that he is literally seeing himself in the household role which the δουλος language requires. But does this mean that Paul's household and sibling language should always be read metaphorically? Ernest Best, commenting on 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, raises the issue thus:

> "To the Christian, **brother** is not merely a metaphor but a reality; since the natural ties of kinship had often been broken at conversion they appreciated more firmly the ties of spiritual kinship. The outside world observed with wonder the mutual love of Christians, something difficult for Western Christians to understand today but still a reality in many areas where Christianity is young"[40]

Best's rationale for this 'reality' should be noted. He sees this new kinship, with its privileges and obligations, as a necessary response to fractured kinship as a result of conversion. A modern commentary on this possibility can be found in Ernest Campbell's description of needs faced by converts to Christianity in the Punjab:

> "The local church or Christian community must not only make a place in its spiritual fellowship to include the new believer but, if it is to see him survive, must open its homes, intimate associations, channels of communication and means of

[40] Best, 1972: 172

> livelihood to him. If he is unmarried, he has no opportunity to marry unless the community gives of its daughters. The church must, in many cases, find employment for a convert driven from his home and boycotted by former associates. In most cases this means taking him into home, into the intimate life of the family"[41]

By way of contrast to Best, Reidar Aasgaard, in a study devoted to the theme, insists that 'metaphor' is the correct approach to the question. Even so his own summary of the same passage in 1 Thessalonians underlines the fact that metaphors are effective agents:

> "In (1 Thessalonians) 4:9-12 φιλαδελφια is not depicted in terms of emotions or attitudes primarily, although sibling and family metaphors clearly emphasise emotional aspects. Rather, Paul here focuses on *behavioural aspects*, on ethical conduct, more than ancient sources usually do. Φιλαδελφια is implemented in action: particularly in their missionary zeal, which serves as a model for other Christians, but also in the open obligation to display sibling love towards Christians who are unknown to them and who live at other places. These are features that only have limited parallels in contemporary ideas on siblingship."[42]

Aasgaard's work is in part based on the thesis that it is important to identify 'brotherhood' as a specific theme in Paul apart from other kinship and family terms. In particular he compares and contrasts Paul with Plutarch. Yet, while Paul and Plutarch discuss similar issues their basic approach is sharply differentiated. Plutarch writes from a negative viewpoint where he senses that family values are in decline and he wishes to reverse that trend. Aasgaard suggests that Paul gives no particular reasons as to why Christians should act in a

[41] Campbell, 1966: 197

[42] Aasgaard, 1998: 184

brotherly way towards one-another. He simply assumes it to be the case, a feature which Aasgaard finds striking.[43]

In fact we may question whether Aasgaard has made the case that Paul's use of sibling language should be considered apart from the larger context of kinship and household language. Karl Olav Sandnes concludes a discussion in which he is concerned to correct any over-simplified notions of 'egalitarianism' in the early Pauline churches thus,

> "It is hardly possible to describe a life-style in early Christianity which is brotherly and not household-like. Reciprocity, sharing of resources and spending time together, may all be applied to both models. The family terminology, or the inclusive language, is not primarily aimed at arousing emotions or feelings. This language of kinship, within the context of Antiquity, says something about economic distribution. This terminology indicates a sharing of resources found among siblings as well as family members"[44]

Sandnes' main thesis is that, in many cases, the household was deeply involved in converting to Christianity and so the early church took on some household structures.

Stephen Barton has illustrated that a new family commitment is part of the eschatological hope of Jesus. His position may be summed up in words which come at the conclusion of his study:

> "It is because personal identity and status in antiquity - but not only then - were determined so much according to conjugal and consanguineous ties that discipleship of Jesus and the call to mission for the sake of the kingdom of God repeatedly pose a challenge to what is otherwise taken for granted. Not that Matthew and Mark, and the Jesus they portray, adopt an anti-social and anti-familial stance, after the Cynic fashion, for

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[43] Aasgaard, 1997: 176

[44] Sandnes, 1997: 162

> example; for filial piety and the bond of marriage still have their place. Rather, the call to follow Jesus places such ties and obligations in a new or different light. Now identity.....is a matter also of giving one's primary allegiance to a new solidarity which consists of the eschatological family of Jesus."[45]

Writing of Paul's identity, and particularly the extent to which he saw himself as Jewish, in Judaism, a Hebrew and/or an Israelite, James Dunn concludes that it was an identity, "....in transition in a way which mirrors precisely the emerging identity of Christianity."[46] Dunn's thesis might be expanded to suggest that Paul understood part of his identity, and the identity of his converts, as giving 'primary allegiance to a new solidarity which consists of the eschatological family of Jesus'.

We take three passages from Paul to illustrate how he perceived this eschatological construct breaking into and transforming relationships within the churches which he was instrumental in establishing.

1. Philemon 16: ἀδελφὸν ἀγαπητόν, μάλιστα ἐμοί, πόσῳ δὲ μᾶλλον σοὶ καὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ.

What is the force of the double phrase καὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ? It is clearly unusual. James Dunn suggests that it is simply unclear, but continues:

> "ἐν σαρκι, as consistently in Paul, describes the world of human relationships, limited by human capacities and constrained by human appetites and ambitions.......In this case it certainly denotes Philemon's relationship to Onesimus apart from their relationship as Christians – that is, as master to slave .. or patron

[45] Barton, 1994: 222. By way of contrast J. Andrew Overman (1990, p123) wishes to stress that Matthew's use of "brotherhood" (particularly in 23:8-11) emphasis the egalitarian nature of the community.

[46] Dunn 1999: 193

> to client.... The fact that both are (now) Christians does not change the fact of their disparate social status; but clearly the relationship ἐν κυρίῳ should be the more important."[47]

It is possible to go further than Dunn suggests. σαρξ certainly describes the world of human relationships but its use in Paul is wide and varied. One infrequent but nevertheless significant use concerns kinship, as distinct from social relations. Romans 1:3, Romans 9:3 and 1 Corinthians 10:18 are clear examples. Aasgaard is cautious about inferring too much from these words, since "Paul's formulations here are not specific enough to allow us to draw definite conclusions, and no parallel texts are of help."[48] Yet Paul's comment, for all its lack of parallel texts, is emphatic and therefore is as likely to suffer from under-interpretation as over-interpretation.[49]

In the context of Philemon, where Paul is discussing the possible restoration of Onesimus to Philemon's household, it is entirely feasible that a kinship interpretation should be drawn from the term. Because Onesimus is a brother in the Lord that should, in fact, make a real and effectual difference, not only to the way in which Philemon treats him but also to the way Philemon views him. From now on their earthly relationships are to reflect the reality of the last

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[47] Dunn, 1996: 336

[48] Aasgaard, 1998: 284

[49] Barclay, 1991: 173f comments "Since it is unclear how exactly to translate καὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ opinions differ as to whether Paul means that Onesimus is to be a) a beloved Christian brother both in everyday affairs and in spiritual matter; b) beloved both as a man and as a Christian; or c) a beloved brother both as a man and as a Christian". However it is very hard to understand what option b) and c) actually imply since Paul does not tend to make the distinction between "a man" and "a Christian".

days ἐν κυρίῳ, namely that they are brothers.[50] John Barclay's discussion of the tensions which might arise in the household if Philemon starts to treat a slave as a brother is helpful and incisive.[51] It may well be that Paul has not thought through the full implications of his call for a change in the way Philemon views Onesimus. Yet if, as noted above, Dunn is correct in his description of Paul's identity as being 'in flux' we should not be surprised that he is caught between the reality of current household commitments and the hope of a new reality breaking in.

2. 1 Corinthians 7:

The history of interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7 illustrates the variety of ways in which this passage may be understood.[52] In particular Paul's guidance has been set either against the backdrop of the Stoic/Cynic debate or as a response to particular factors which specifically refer to Corinth, such as food shortages. While these may offer interesting parallels and possible background material they fail to get to the heart of the puzzle which we face in this chapter. It may be helpful to move away from issues of sexual relations (although Paul's words in verse 1, whether a quotation of the Corinthian understanding or not, seem to suggest that this is the main agenda) and see lying behind Paul's extended discussion an answer to the question "should a Christian change their household status or not?" This brings together the material on marriage, divorce, the manumission of slaves and the position of widows.

Paul places all of his advice in 1 Corinthians 7 within a strong eschatological framework, as in v. 29 - ὁ καιρὸς συνσταλμένος ἐστίν – but this may not necessarily be the first time that the

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[50] Sandnes, 1994: 77 includes a comment which expresses the position well: "Paul thus makes it abundantly clear that his concept of Christian brotherhood is much more than a spiritual relationship between believers. It is striking that he goes so far as to call it physical brotherhood"

[51] Barclay, 1991: passim

[52] See Thiselton, 2000: 483-497

Corinthians have been asked to consider their household arrangements in such a light. The whole question of household relationships may well have arisen precisely because they have already picked up, quite possible from Paul himself, that in the light of the last days their understanding of household and kinship obligations and privileges must undergo change.

If this is the case then here, as elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, Paul may be perceived as being somewhat inconsistent. On the one hand his basic approach appears to be driven by the principle best annunciated in Galatians 3:28 - οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. On the other hand the reality of sexual desire, inter-faith marriages and master-slave responsibilities keep his advice and concessions firmly rooted in present relationships. He seems to expect change, yet his advice is to "remain" (v8). As previously we must take seriously the fact that Paul is offering guidance in what he perceives to be a fluid situation.

3. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12:

This passage contains three significantly linked concepts which relate to our theme. First we find Paul's encouragement to his community to continue in their practice of φιλαδελφια,[53] which is underlined by his comment that in fact they are θεοδιδακτοι. The term θεοδιδακτος is unusual. It may be an echo of Isaiah 54:13 or reflect the sense of Jeremiah 31:31-34. Behind it may lie Paul's conviction that the Spirit of God instructs and inspires Christians to love. Less likely is John Kloppenborg's suggestion that it relates to the brotherly love of Castor and Pollux.[54] However one might also understand the term as Paul's way of saying that the Thessalonians commitment to Christ draws them naturally into a new family commitment to each-other, which was marked by φιλαδελφια.. As

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[53] Note Esler, 2000, and in particular p 170.

[54] Kloppenborg, 1993

noted above the term should be understood as broader than merely an egalitarian brotherhood.[55]

Second, we find that this solidarity of kinship is expressed not merely in the immediate vicinity of Thessalonika but εἰς παντας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς τοὺς ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ. In other words Paul expects that his new communities will naturally understand that they have a responsibility for an extended kinship network. This theme is not elaborated further. It is simply understood by Paul and the Thessalonians.

Third comes Paul's instruction to his readers: καὶ φιλοτιμεῖσθαι ἡσυχάζειν καὶ πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια καὶ ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν ὑμῶν, καθὼς ὑμῖν παρηγγείλαμεν,ἵνα περιπατῆτε εὐσχημόνως πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω καὶ μηδενὸς χρείαν ἔχητε.

Behind these instructions it is usual to suppose either that some in the Thessalonian community have been caught up in a fever of eschatological excitement,[56] that they had given in to the dangers of excessive evangelism[57] or that they have become over-involved in the political life of the city.[58] None of these explanations seems totally satisfactory. If, however, we read this instruction from Paul in the context of the kinship commitment which he has already approved we may see that he is attempting to correct a misunderstanding of the relationship. We might reconstruct the situation by suggesting that there were those within the church, particularly those who belonged to the lower socioeconomic classes (as urban craftsmen and labourers of low status), who believed that

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[55] Fatum, 1997 takes an alternative view, and considers the term to be gender specific.

[56] Best, 1972: 175

[57] Barclay, 1992: 53. See also 1993: 522 - "Those whom Paul rebukes here, then, are those who interfere all too readily in the business of non-believers and behave disgracefully towards them"

[58] Hock, 1980: 46-47

their new kinship connections meant that they could become financially dependent on those within the church who had greater economic resources.[59] (Is it too far-fetched to suggest that they took the model of the Jerusalem church as their rationale?) However such an attitude was not generally understood and could bring shame on the nascent Christian community. Paul, partly to avoid the church coming into disrepute and partly out of his own convictions as a Pharisee, instructs them to continue working with their hands.

Corinthian Reconstruction:

These three passages have served to illustrate how Paul's new understanding of kinship affects everyday behaviour and commitments. How might this approach help us to appreciate the tensions between Paul and the Corinthians regarding the Collection?

We recognise that Paul's enthusiasm for the Collection is not simply driven by the concern to improve relationships between his mission and Jerusalem, nor is it just what is loosely termed 'charitable giving', nor is it primarily a theological sign of the nations' pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the last days, although all these elements may be involved.[60] Rather it is a natural consequence of his conviction that those in Christ have entered into an entirely new family structure which does not entirely supersede the obligations of the old structure as yet but is beginning to do so. Sharing wealth is a sign of commitment in good faith to one's new kin in Christ.

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[59] Russell, 1988: 110 expresses it well: - "If Pauline Churches are composed primarily of believers from a lower social position (the poor, slaves, artisans, freedmen) with a minority from higher social levels in positions of leadership, then the idleness is more likely expressed by believers who are manual labourers from a lower social class. Paul urges these idle poor. caught up as beneficiaries of Christian love, to work, being self-sufficient and constructive in their relationships with others."

[60] See Martin, 1986: pp 256-258 for a useful summary of these possibilities.

In various parts of 1 Corinthians Paul has to deal with problems in the 'family'. In chapter 4:14-21 he argues for his own place in the family circle. In chapter 6 he has to address the issues of disputes among brothers. Chapter 7, as already noted, concerns the relationship between the new family structures and the old. It is therefore clear that the Corinthians have not understood the implications of their new commitment to one another to the extent that Paul would wish. How, therefore, should Paul approach the delicate issue of finance? His approach, as noted at the beginning of this paper, is to avoid any further detailed defence of an issue which is already known to the Corinthians[61]. Rather he simply assumes that his authority within the family is now established and seeks to exercise it.

Unfortunately for Paul this tactic proved ineffective. Furthermore the added complication of other 'apostles' coming to Corinth and gaining influence within the Christian community left Paul in a particularly vulnerable position. The new visitors undermined the credibility of Paul's Jerusalem project by pointing out the differences and tensions between Paul and Jerusalem. The seeds of doubt about Paul's integrity in matters of finance were sown.

In the light of this Paul makes the extensive appeal which we find in 2 Corinthians 8 & 9. He does not enter a long explanation in so many words of new kinship in Christ and the financial obligations which come with it. The questions which he had addressed in 1 Corinthians 7 show that such an explanation might prove confusing and counter-productive. But, while choosing to encourage the Corinthians in giving by way of the example of the Macedonians and the grace of Christ, Paul uses sibling language to put his whole appeal in context.

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[61] Note Mitchell, 1989, who effectively questions the suggestion that the formula περι δε necessarily refers to written correspondence from the Corinthians to Paul but accepts that it refers to a matter which is the shared experience of both parties.

Assessment:

This paper describes itself as 'an exploratory paper'. Clearly the case presented is not watertight as it involves a certain amount of reconstruction for which the texts are able to offer little in the way of directly supporting evidence. It is also based on a relatively unsophisticated use of the concept of 'kinship'.

However I propose that the direction which this paper follows is worthy of further investigation. It takes seriously the concept of kinship which is increasingly recognised as a vital part of self-understanding and daily interaction in the Greco-Roman world. It attempts to develop the link between kinship and finance. It recognises that, for Paul, the coming of Christ meant that all human relationships would undergo change, and were therefore somewhat in flux. It seeks to offer a credible scenario for a serious misunderstanding between Paul and the Corinthians over money which heretofore has been overlooked or only partially explained.

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Donald P. Ker

PREACHING IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Dr. George K. Barr

Abstract

The Gospels provide many of the stories that lay at the heart of the faith of the Early Church. Acts gives a very limited indication of the content of preaching material used by the early missionaries. The epistles suggest a wider range of doctrinal and ethical material. Only by understanding the significance of the scalometric data can evidence be drawn from the collaboration of Paul and Silvanus in developing material for sermons, which is reflected in the epistles.

The Gospels agree that when Mary came to the tomb on the third day she was given the message, 'The Lord is risen'. She, in turn, passed that message on to the disciples. The Gospels were compiled some decades after the death of Jesus, but they all point to this central feature in the preaching and belief of the Early Church – 'Jesus is risen!' Life and faith were simple in those early days, unencumbered by theological complexities. Acceptance of the truth of Jesus' resurrection was accompanied by repentance, which led to baptism and membership of the Church. But who was Jesus, and what were the implications of following his way?

Converts to the new faith felt an immediate need to know more about Jesus, a need that was met by circulating stories about him. In the earliest days, the house churches lived on stories rather than on preaching. Stories about Jesus' life and actions were precious. It would be a great day when one of the disciples visited a house church and told the people what he could remember about Jesus' life and works. Some of these stories were written down and shared with members of the family and with friends who belonged to other house groups. Many house churches built up their own collections of stories about Jesus – little "Qs". As the Church spread and as the contents of those small collections were shared, there was a tendency for the collections to develop a common form. When Matthew and Luke came to write their gospels, they may have had several collections at their disposal. I remain rather sceptical about the modern theories that over-systematise "Q", especially those that

detect a number of layers, attributing to Jesus only the most elementary material, and imagining that authors unknown added the upper layers. Jesus' thinking was probably far more profound than that of his modern critics, and he employed many traditional concepts that were familiar to his hearers. In all probability, Matthew and Luke not only had Mark's Gospel before them as they compiled their own gospels, they may also have had several collections of sayings, and each had access to other Birth and Passion narratives.

While knowing stories about Jesus was important, it was also necessary to relate Jesus' life and work to the traditions of his people, and so very quickly preachers turned to the prophesies of the Old Testament to show their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. These two strands are present in the records of the earliest days of the Christian faith – the use of stories about the Lord and the quotation of Old Testament prophecies showing the meaning of his coming.

From that early position, preaching developed to cover a wide range of ethical issues. It is the purpose of this paper to attempt to trace the appearance of a variety of themes that were employed as the Church's missions developed. To do this various scalometric methods are used.

Scalometric methods

Scalometric methods throw some light on the different ways in which the Gospel writers handled the stories that constituted their source material[1]. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke produce quite different patterns from those found in the Gospels of Mark and John. As noted below, these features may be related to some ancient traditions that have been handed down concerning Mark and John.

The existence of scaling effects in literature must be recognised if the rewarding partnership between Paul and Silvanus is to be explored. In previous papers, I have shown the scale-related patterns

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1 See my previous article, 'Significant Scale Changes in the Gospels and Acts', *IBS* 20 (1998), pp. 75-91.

that occur in all thirteen Pauline epistles[2]. A search through a million and a quarter words of texts ancient and modern has failed to discover any similar patterns that are tied to identifiable textual units. The combination of Paul's rhythmic style with dramatic scale changes may be unique. On that basis, I accept that these texts came from Paul's hand with the exception of some second century interpolations in 1 Timothy (3.1-16) and Titus (1.7-9) concerning qualities required in church leaders, and a few angry verses about Cretans that may have been added spontaneously during dictation (Titus 1.12-16). Graphs show that these verses clearly do not belong to the original pattern.

In another paper,[3] I have described the scale-related patterns found in Hebrews and 1 and 2 Peter. These patterns show high-scale features that are in proportion (despite differences in the lengths of these works), and that relate to inclusions. Again, such a combination of features has not been found anywhere else in the test material and so these three works are taken to come from the hand of Silvanus (1 Peter 5.12), but to have been composed under very different circumstances. These conclusions may be related to the stylometric work of D.L. Mealand[4] and G.R. Ledger[5] whose figures show that 1 and 2 Peter and Hebrews cluster closely. It must be said that the purpose of these authors was to determine the extent of the Pauline corpus, and so neither commented on the clustering of these particular epistles. The clustering, however, ties in with the scale-related patterns which scalometric analysis reveals.

I have examined the differences between the first four Paulines and the group comprising the Pastorals and the Petrines by making use

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[2] See 'Scale and the Pauline Epistles', *IBS* 17 (1995), pp. 22-41 and 'A Computer Model for the Pauline Epistles', *Literary and Linguistic Computing,* Vol. 16, No. 3 (2001), pp. 233-50.

[3] See 'The Structure of Hebrews and of 1 and 2 Peter', *IBS* 19 (1997), pp. 17-31.

[4] D.L. Mealand, 'The Extent of the Pauline Corpus: A Multivariate Approach', *JSNT* 59 (1995), pp. 61-92.

[5] G.R. Ledger, 'An Exploration of Differences in the Pauline Epistles using Multivariate Analysis', *LLC,* Vol. 10, No. 2, (1995), pp. 85-97.

of the kind of data employed by Anthony Kenny[6] in his statistical study of the New Testament texts. Table 1 shows the rates of occurrence of some small words and parts of speech which act as discriminators between the first four Paulines and the group comprising the Pastorals and the Petrines. This Table will be referred to later in the article. The differences are found to refer, not to authorship, but to style.[7] Paul employed a formal style when his attention was focused on the content of the epistle he was dictating, and he reverted to an informal style when his attention was focused on the recipients of the epistle, or when he was incorporating sermon material. The informal style was also used generally in preaching.

These scaling patterns in the Pastorals, the Petrines and Hebrews give a new insight that would not otherwise be available. The Pastorals and the Petrines may be seen to reflect the missionary work of Paul and Silvanus during a critical period lasting almost three years. The points of contact between 1 Peter and the Paulines, and between Hebrews and the Paulines, reflect the themes employed in preaching to unlearned people. The unusual vocabulary found in the Pastorals, and in the Petrines and Hebrews also reflects the more informal style used in social intercourse and in preaching to the common folk. Scholars who treat all texts as if they were homogeneous with regard to scale cannot make these links. Texts may no longer be treated in this way as it is clear that dramatic differences in scale exist both between texts and within individual texts. Differences that traditionally have been thought to be differences in authorship are now seen to be differences in style. With these tools, the development of preaching material may be examined.

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[6] A. Kenny, *A Stylometric Study of the New Testament* (Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1986).
[7] See my article 'Two Styles in the New Testament Epistles', *LLC,* Vol. 18, No. 3 (2003).

Scalometry and the Gospel stories

Scalometric analysis of the Gospels shows that the compilers handled their source material in different ways[8]. Matthew and Luke arranged their material in batches and wrote out each batch at a different scale level; each batch therefore has a consistent running mean sentence length and this produces 'scale planes' in these graphs. Mark and John wrote out each pericope at a different scale level; there are therefore no scale planes in the graphs of these gospels. This is consistent with the tradition that Mark noted down what Peter preached. He may have reproduced these notes with little alteration and so each appears at its original scale level. In John's case, it is consistent with the tradition that John drew from his memory bank stories about Jesus. These he reproduced at the scale level at which he had become accustomed to telling each story. Neither of these authors rearranged their source material in batches as Matthew and Luke did.

The astonishing feature, however, is that in all the Gospels, the Passion narratives and the stories of Jesus' risen appearances have the lowest mean sentence lengths, that is, they are written at a low-scale level with no hint of the monumentality that goes with mythological development. In this they are unlike the Birth narratives and the record of Pentecost in Acts; these all show marked signs of development and a high scale-level. This means, I believe, that the Passion narratives and the stories of the risen Jesus were written down and fixed in form very soon after the event, even before the writers were aware of the significance of the events they describe. Oral tradition allows scope for mythological development; the written word does not. The Passion narratives may represent the most primitive written sources to be found in the New Testament.

Preaching to the Jews in Acts

The Book of Acts shows that early preaching was based on the resurrection of Jesus. It was aimed at Jewish people and did not

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[8] See my article, 'Significant Scale Changes in the Gospels and Acts', *IBS,* 20 (1998), pp. 75-91.

come to grips in any substantial way with the special needs of Gentile converts. The author of Acts looked back over several decades to Peter's preaching at Pentecost, which saw in Jesus' resurrection the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and called for repentance. In Stephen's speech of defence, salvation history is recounted. This is seen as being fulfilled in Jesus death and resurrection. These speeches of Peter's and Stephen's in Acts are, of course, reconstructions by the author, but they point to the early preaching tradition as it was addressed to the Jewish community. This pattern of preaching is consistent throughout the Book of Acts; it is found in Philip preaching to the Ethiopian, and Paul preaching to Jews.

Preaching to the Gentiles in Acts

When Peter took the good news to Gentile people, it made no significant difference to the gospel that was preached (Acts 10 and 11). The Gentiles received the same gift and were granted repentance unto life. The debate as to whether Gentiles should be circumcised had little effect on preaching. The general pattern was a review of history, leading to belief in Jesus crucified and risen, leading to repentance and baptism into the Church. Paul met with opposition from Jewish traditionalists throughout his missionary journeys, but descriptions of preaching remain much the same throughout Acts. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household' (Acts 16.31). Sometimes it is expressed as 'proclaiming the word of God' (Acts 13.5), or preaching 'Jesus the Saviour' (Acts 13.23), or preaching that 'the Christ was Jesus' (Acts 18.5), or preaching 'Jesus and the Resurrection' (Acts 17.18), or 'pleading about the Kingdom of God' (Acts 19.8)

Paul's speeches of defence before the people (Acts 22), before the Council (Acts 23), before Felix (Acts 23), before Festus (Acts 25) and before Agrippa (Acts 26) add little to the pattern. He recounts his own personal history, his conversion, and his belief in the risen Lord. This pattern persists to the end of the record in Acts. In Rome, he 'testified to the Kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the prophets' (Acts 28.23). There can be no doubt that this outline of preaching is

a true reflection of some of the preaching that took place in these early days, but does it give an adequate picture, or is it severely limited by the author's understanding? This record covers the whole period of Paul's ministry, yet there is no evidence of preaching on ethical matters, and no indication that the author knew about and understood the questions that assume great importance in Paul's epistles and that clearly must have exercised his mind.

The Epistles

Table 1 shows the rates of occurrence of several features that discriminate between the first four Paulines and the Pastorals/Petrines. The formal texts are shown at the top of the Table in white cells, and the informal texts are shown at the bottom in black cells (the only aberration being a low count of kai in 1 Peter). In between lie epistles with mixed styles. When the formal epistles are broken down section by section, however, it is found that they are not uniformly formal; some passages have the informal characteristics that are found in the Pastorals and Petrines. Notable is Romans 1.18–2.29, which some scholars have taken to be an interpolation. This it cannot be, because the passage comprises exactly two rhythmic cycles that are essential to the Pauline pattern. Romans takes its overall formal character mainly from the characteristics of 3.1–11.36, the rest of the epistle being mixed in style. Galatians takes its formal style from 3.23–5.12, the remainder showing a greater degree of informality. The difference is one of style, and where passages of sermon material like Romans 1.18–29 have been incorporated in the epistle their characteristics are closer to those of the Pastorals than they are to those of their immediate context.

In 1 Corinthians, chapter 15 begins, 'Now, I would remind you, brethren, in what terms I preached to you the gospel…' It is surely not simplistic to assume that the remainder of chapter 15 in fact includes selections from Paul's sermon notes. This is confirmed by the less formal style of the material.

FORMAL – WHITE										
	Morphology	GNM	GNM	GNM	GNM	GNM	GNM	BNM	BNM	BNM
Words	Part of speech	καὶ	ἀλλ' ἀλλά	γάρ	οὐ, οὐκ οὐχ	particles qs,qt,qv	article nom.	nouns all	adj. normal	adverb
7111	**Rom.**	3.81	0.97	2.03	1.88	0.66	4.18	23.58	4.22	4.67
6829	**1 Cor.**	4.09	1.05	1.54	2.42	1.05	4.35	20.11	4.93	5.65
4477	**2 Cor.**	4.42	1.54	1.71	2.23	0.80	3.37	20.13	3.31	6.16
2230	**Gal.**	3.23	1.03	1.61	1.79	0.58	3.09	23.63	2.69	5.78
MIXED		NOTE: GNM = GNM AGNT2 Friberg GNT Morphology. BNM = BNM Bible Works NTB morphology. Figures give rates of occurrence as a percentage of the whole text.								
2422	Eph.	5.66	0.54	0.45	0.62	0.12	2.52	25.68	3.76	3.10
1629	Phil.	6.57	0.92	0.80	0.56	0.43	2.46	22.41	3.99	5.65
1582	Col.	6.38	0.19	0.38	0.82	0.25	2.65	24.59	3.29	3.03
1481	1 Thess.	6.89	0.88	1.55	1.22	0.20	2.77	21.40	2.97	5.81
823	2 Thess.	6.08	0.61	0.61	1.09	0.12	3.65	24.42	1.94	3.65
335	Philemon	5.37	0.60	0.90	0	0.30	2.09	24.18	4.48	4.48
INFORMAL - BLACK										
1387	**1 Tim. ex. 3:1-16**	6.2	0.79	0.87	0.58	0.25	2.60	25.67	9.01	3.24
1238	**2 Tim.**	5.49	0.97	1.13	0.97	0.16	2.59	25.04	6.54	4.12
535	**Tit. ex 1:7-9,12-16**	5.42	0.37	0.91	0	0	2.43	24.18	12.90	2.58
1684	**1 Pet.**	4.22	0.95	0.60	0.83	0.24	2.85	25.48	7.84	4.04
1099	**2 Pet.**	5.73	0.55	1.36	1.18	0.09	2.09	27.30	6.92	4.28

TABLE 1

The style of Ephesians has informal characteristics that are markedly similar to the Pastorals and the Petrines, and this may be due to the fact that Paul was not writing in his formal mode, but was giving the Ephesian elders material to be used with new and inexperienced members. Paul does not know these members personally, but is thinking his way into their needs. In Colossians Paul is again thinking his way into the needs of new members whom he does not know, as he helps them to face up to false teaching. Philemon and Philippians are friendly letters that are largely informal in style.

Hebrews, which I take to be the work of Silvanus, has two substantial passages that show the informal characteristics of sermon material. These are 4.14-7.28 concerning Melchizedek and 11.1-12.2 which is a straightforward sermon concerning heroes of the faith, geared to ordinary people. Hebrews gives us a unique insight into apostolic preaching and is not to be regarded as an oddity of unknown provenance. This insight, of course, depends upon the recognition of Hebrews and the Petrines as being the work of Silvanus.

The sermon material that has been incorporated into these epistles greatly enlarges the scope of early preaching, but it is extended further when consideration is given to points of contact between the Paulines, the Pastorals, the Petrines and Hebrews, and to the unusual vocabulary found in the Pastorals, the Petrines and Hebrews.

Points of contact between 1 Peter and Romans

These points of contact have been listed in another article[9]. Favourite texts appear in both 1 Peter and Romans. These are from Isaiah (1 Pet. 2.6-8 and Rom. 9.32-33) and from Hosea (1 Pet. 2.10 and Rom. 9.25). Other points of contact are as follows:

'Do not be conformed…' occurs at 1 Peter 1.14 and Romans12.2.
'Love one another…' occurs at 1 Peter 1.22 and Romans 12.9f.

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[9] See Table 1 in 'The Preaching of Paul and Silvanus', *IBS* 21 (1999), pp. 101-118.

'A living (or spiritual) sacrifice acceptable to God' occurs at 1 Peter 2.5 and Romans 12.1.

'Passions of the flesh' in 1 Peter 2.11 may echo 'the law of sin in my members' in Romans 7.23.

'Be subject.....to every human institution' ('governing authorities') occurs at 1 Peter 2. 13f and Romans 13.1-4.

'Do not return evil for evil' occurs at 1 Peter 3.9 and Romans 12.17.

'Be sober' ('think with sober judgement') occurs at 1 Peter 4.7-11 and Romans 12.3,6. In the same passages are found references to 'employing the gifts we have received'.

These points of contact indicate a wider selection of preaching themes than those found in Acts. Paul and Silvanus heard each other preach repeatedly and references to this material appear in their epistles. My impression is that the passages referred to in 1 Peter form part of a more consistent scheme than do the occurrences in Romans; the latter seem to be more random. Does this mean that 1 Peter is in fact the earlier epistle? Received wisdom would say that was most unlikely to be the case. Romans is generally reckoned to have been written in Corinth during Paul's last three-month stay there, possibly in 55 or 56 CE. 1 Peter is dated with reference to persecutions under Nero (64-65 CE), Domitian (90-95 CE) or even Trajan (early in the second century). But is it necessary to relate the content of the epistle to widespread persecutions by the authorities? Jesus was put to death by direction of a Roman official; James, John's brother, was slain by Herod (Acts 12.2); at Lystra Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14.19). Paul was imprisoned at Philippi (Acts 16); he was examined by scourging (Acts 22.24); he was saved from being torn in pieces by the crowd (Acts 23.10); the Jews bound themselves by an oath to kill him (Acts 23.12). Being a Christian during the time of Paul's missionary activity was very risky. We who have experienced sectarian violence in the twenty-first century should appreciate the risks of belonging to a small sect in the first century, and 1 Peter may simply be a letter of encouragement to Christians in dangerous times.

On balance, I think that 1 Peter was probably dictated not long after Silvanus left Paul's mission to join Peter's mission to the northern parts of Asia Minor, and that in both 1 Peter and Romans we find reflections of sermon material that had been much used by Paul and

Silvanus. Occasional parallels occur between 1 Peter and 1 Corinthians, Colossians and Galatians, but these are isolated instances. A more consistent series is found in Titus.

Points of contact between 1 Peter and Titus

These are as follows:

'Ransomed with the precious blood ' ('gave himself to redeem us') occurs in 1 Peter 1.18-19 and Titus 2.14.
'Put away all malice...envy' ('passing our days in malice and envy') occurs in 1 Peter 2.1 and Titus 3.3.
'God's own people' ('a people of his own') occurs in 1 Peter 2.9 and Titus 2.14.
'Abstain from passions of the flesh' ('renounce worldly passions') occurs in 1 Peter 2.11 and Titus 2.12.
'Be subject to every human institution' ('submissive to rulers and authorities') occurs in 1 Peter 2.13 and Titus 3.1.
'Born anew...through...Jesus' ('regeneration...through Jesus') occurs in 1 Peter 1.3, 3.21 and Titus 3.5.

These also may reflect familiar sermon material.

Points of contact between 1 Peter and Ephesians

I have listed elsewhere[10] twenty points of contact between 1 Peter and Ephesians. Again, it is my impression that they follow a more consistent plan in 1 Peter, while in Ephesians these references to familiar sermon material are attached in a more random way while the author follows another theme. Notably, the Household Code occurs in both works, but in Ephesians the comparison between marriage and Christ's relationship with the Church is greatly extended to form the climax to the material contained in the prime pattern. There is in these epistles both a more mature theology and a more developed ethical content than is found in Acts.

[10] See Table 2 in 'The Preaching of Paul and Silvanus'.

Preaching themes relating to the points of contact

In these epistles, a literary dependence is out of the question. One cannot imagine the author of 1 Peter sitting down with copies of six Pauline epistles before him and selecting fragments from each to set into his own epistle. These points of contact between 1 Peter and the Paulines represent a considerable development in subject matter, when compared with the preaching in Acts. They cover:

Passions of the flesh
Clean, honest, sober living
Brotherly love versus evil attitudes
Christian civic and social responsibility
Commitment in faith
Salvation history
The gospel, baptism, resurrection
Freedom in Christ
The Household Code
Stewardship,

This represents the expansion in preaching themes that took place during Paul's missionary journeys.

It is interesting that the parallels occur between 1 Peter and both Romans and Ephesians. By any reckoning, there is some distance between the writing of Romans and Ephesians. Perhaps the memory of sermon material is not enough to account for these parallels. When Paul was in Rome, he was very anxious to have 'the books and above all the parchments' (2 Tim. 4.13). It seems likely that Paul and Silvanus used *membranae* to record at least the outline of some sermon material. Paul may have had a phenomenal memory, but it is more likely that a fourteen chapter prime pattern in Romans was achieved through the use of *membranae* notes. To achieve the contrasts in scale that actually exist in Romans 1–14, it would be necessary to dictate these chapters virtually in one operation, which would be something of a *tour de force.*

Points of contact between Hebrews and the Paulines

Nineteen parallels[11] are found between Hebrews and five different Pauline epistles. Again, it is difficult to imagine the author of Hebrews selecting fragments from such a collection of Pauline epistles and incorporating them in his own work. It is much more likely that the parallels reflect common preaching material.

In these points of contact shared by Hebrews and the Paulines, favourite texts appear. These are from Deuteronomy, Psalms and Habakkuk. God's promise to Abraham in Genesis is featured, and Mount Sinai is likened to the heavenly Jerusalem in both Hebrews and Galatians.

The purpose of Hebrews is rather different from that of the Petrines and the Paulines (including the Pastorals). It is not related to a specific pastoral situation, but is an attempt to show the significance of Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish religion. Nevertheless, some of the vocabulary and illustrations from the common store of preaching material have found their way into the epistle.

Unusual vocabulary used by Paul and Silvanus

In another paper,[12] I have listed sixty-two unusual words that are shared by the Pastorals, and by 1 and 2 Peter and Hebrews. P.N. Harrison concluded that these were second century words as they are again found in the works of the Fathers. However, none of them reflects second century developments in theology; they are all very ordinary words that might be understood by people in the mid-first century. I have already pointed out that some of these words seem to reflect colloquial use, and the subject matter associated with them is an indication that they were used in preaching to the common people.

Amongst other topics these words refer to:

[11] See Table 3 in 'The Preaching of Paul and Silvanus'.
[12] See Table 4 in 'The Preaching of Paul and Silvanus'.

Obedience
Living a life worthy of Christians
Proper speech
A healthy attitude to wealth
The use of God's gifts
Honesty
Living peaceably
Laying on of hands
Humility
Remembering their faith
Not submitting to lusts
Giving hospitality

The list also reflects the false teaching that troubled the Early Church. It was not a fully developed heresy, but a rag-bag of half-believed and half-understood philosophical and religious maxims that constituted folklore, categorised as 'old wives' tales' and 'fables' involving corruption and temptation.

Conclusion

There are three strands to be followed in tracing the development of preaching in the Early Church. The first is the transmission of stories about Jesus' life and work. Through oral tradition, many small collections of sayings about Jesus were gathered in house churches. As these collections were shared between groups, they gradually grew towards a common form. The gospel writers may have had access to several collections. Other collections of stories were also available to the Gospel writers such as the Birth and Passion narratives. Of these, the Passion narratives are notable in showing no trace of the monumentality that is associated with mythological development, indicating that the texts were fixed at a very early stage. The Birth narratives, like those relating to Pentecost, do show signs of such development.

Stories were also passed on through the preaching of some of the disciples. Biblical evidence and the evidence of tradition must not be needlessly jettisoned at this point. The evidence of 1 Peter does point towards a mission led by Peter in the northern parts of Asia Minor. That may provide the setting for the tradition in which Mark

noted down what Peter preached. It is interesting that the pericopes in Mark's gospel are recorded at different scale levels, as if he compiled his gospel from notes without recasting the material as he did so. John also used stories in his preaching, and through time added a very distinctive theological input. However, he remained essentially a storyteller, and the fact that each story in his gospel is set at its own scale level is in keeping with the tradition that as an old man he drew from his memory bank stories that he was accustomed to using in his preaching about Jesus.

The second strand is the elementary systematisation that is found in Acts. The same pattern persists throughout the book. The resurrection of Jesus is preached; he is accepted as Lord; this leads to repentance, baptism and membership of the Church. No distinction is made between preaching to Jews and preaching to Gentiles. This undoubtedly reflects a genuine element in the history of the Early Church but it appears to be systematised and limited by the author's understanding.

The third strand is found in the rewarding but uneasy partnership of Paul and Silvanus. The points of contact between the works which I attribute to Silvanus (1 and 2 Peter and Hebrews) and those attributed to Paul (all thirteen Paulines, with the exception of interpolations in 1 Timothy and Titus) and the unusual vocabulary found in 1 and 2 Peter and Hebrews, point to a considerable development of theological and ethical themes. Silvanus maintained his own point of view throughout the period of collaboration with Paul. Reference to 'the holy priesthood' in 1 Peter 2.4-6 is an indication of his particular interest, which is elaborated in Hebrews. Eventually, the strain of conflicting viewpoints may have proved to be too great, and Silvanus left Paul to join Peter's mission.

The three-year period which Paul and Silvanus spent in mission together saw the development of a considerable theological and ethical dimension in their preaching. They worked out their material together, heard each other preach the same material time after time, and echoes of that material found their way into their writings. To this day we may detect well worn sermon material in Romans 1.18-2.29 (Man's sinfulness before God), 1 Corinthians 15 (Resurrection), Hebrews 4.14-7.28 (a priest after the order of

Melchizedek), some elements in Hebrews 9 and 10 (the first and the new covenant, 'let us draw near…in full assurance of faith'), and in Hebrews 11.1-12.2 (Heroes of the faith).

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